



## KEYS TO EFFECTIVE HEALTH PROMOTION



### Key #12: Bottom Line Up Front (BLUF) Health Promotion

Keeping the bottom line up front (BLUF) in health promotion will help you get and sustain Command support. A BLUF approach will also help you more realistically measure the impact of your health promotion program.

The bottom line in health promotion answers two key questions:

- How will participant health be improved?
- What's in it for the Commander?

**The ultimate bottom line: all roads should lead to readiness.**

- Always be ready to communicate to leadership the ways that your program impacts readiness.
- Think like a commander: what program outcomes will be important from a command point of view?
- Develop line-centered language that communicates those outcomes.
- Ask participants how they think a particular program enhances force readiness. This input is a valuable source of information.

Use the following steps as a BLUF approach to health promotion.

**Step 1: Think about the end of the program first and plan backwards.**

- It has been said, "If you don't know where you're going, any road will get you there."
- Before planning or implementing any part of the program, be able to answer the questions: how will participant health be improved? What's in it for the Commander?

**Step 2: Identify concrete program outcomes.**

- Identify up front what the program is working towards.
  - For example: will participants lose weight? Walk more steps? Decrease injuries? Move to another stage of change?
- Identify any processes or procedures that will be improved.
  - For example: which pharmacy operations will become more efficient? How will record-keeping be streamlined?

**Step 3: Determine what will be measured to show that program goals were achieved.**

- Consider what data is really needed to show program effectiveness. Avoid the temptation to collect every possible piece of data. Choose a handful of important data points and stick to those.
- Think backwards when deciding what data to collect – consider how easily follow-up data can be collected when a program ends. Getting follow-up data is often a challenge.
- Only collect data for health behaviors or indicators that the program actually affected.
  - For example: if the main program goal is that participants will walk more steps, then it may be better NOT to choose changes in cholesterol level as a program outcome (unless the program specifically addresses cholesterol).
- Avoid measuring outcomes that the program cannot (or did not) affect.

**Step 4: Determine what program elements must be included to move participants towards the program goals.**

- The concrete program outcomes identified in Step 2 are the compass for keeping the program on track. All program elements should lead towards that ultimate goal.

Working backwards when planning and implementing health promotion programs is really forward thinking. Keeping the bottom line up front is a smart approach to health promotion.

*To access the complete set of Keys to Effective Health Promotion, go to: <http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/dhpw/Population/HPPI.aspx>.  
For questions about the HPPI Program contact us at: [hppl\\_program\\_info@amedd.army.mil](mailto:hppl_program_info@amedd.army.mil).*